

## HOW BLUETOOTH GOT ITS NAME

The term “Bluetooth” has nothing to do with being blue or tooth-like in appearance and has everything to do with medieval Scandinavia.

Harald Bluetooth was the Viking king of Denmark between 958 and 970. King Harald was famous for uniting parts of Denmark and Norway into one nation and converting the Danes to Christianity.



So, what does a turn-of-the-last-millennium Viking king have to do with wireless communication? He was a uniter!

In the mid-1990s, the wireless communication field needed some uniting. Numerous corporations were developing competing, non-compatible standards. Many people saw this growing fragmentation as an impediment to widespread adoption of wireless.

One such person was Jim Kardach, an Intel engineer working on wireless technologies. Kardach took on the role of a cross-corporate mediator dedicated to bringing various companies together to develop an industry-wide standard for low-power, short-range radio connectivity.

At the time, Kardach had been reading a book about Vikings that featured the reign of Harald, whom he viewed as an ideal symbol for bringing competing parties together, as he explained:

Bluetooth was borrowed from the 10th-century, second king of Denmark, King Harald Bluetooth; who was famous for uniting Scandinavia just as we intended to unite the PC and cellular industries with a short-range wireless link.

The various interested parties eventually came together to form the Bluetooth Special Interest Group, which developed the agreed-upon standard we know and love today. “Bluetooth” was originally meant to be a placeholder, but the name had already taken off in the press and thus remains around today.

The millennium-old shout-out doesn’t end there. The Bluetooth logo—that cryptic symbol in a blue oval printed on the box your phone came in - is actually the initials of Harald Bluetooth written in Scandinavian runes.

